



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
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August 12, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**RESPONSE TO THE FINAL REPORT OF THE 2004-2005
LOS ANGELES COUNTY GRAND JURY**

Attached is the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's response to the 2004-2005 Grand Jury Report's recommendations. The area of interest to the Grand Jury is to, "establish a uniform standard for the display and dissemination of citizen complaint forms and their processing procedure at the stations and jails."

Should you have questions regarding our response, please contact Commander Roberta Abner, of my office, at (323) 526-5000.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA
SHERIFF

A Tradition of Service

RESPONSE TO THE GRAND JURY FINAL REPORT

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES – LOS ANGELES COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: 2004-2005 GRAND JURY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
JAIL COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION NO. 2 (Regarding Field Operations-Patrol Stations)

Both the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Los Angeles City Police Department establish a uniform standard for the display and dissemination of citizen complaint forms and their processing procedure at the stations and jails.

RESPONSE

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has had a uniform standard for handling public complaints since 1992. This standard is found in the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedure, sections 3-04/000.00 through 3-04/010.35. The Sheriff's Department utilizes a process whereby the complainant meets with the Watch Commander who generates a Watch Commander's Service Comment Report (WCSCR). The WCSCR forms are completed by the Watch Commander. Each form has a tracking number. Strict control of the form is necessary to ensure that every complaint is handled and no complaint is erroneously or intentionally discarded. Every complainant that comes into a station shall be personally greeted by the Watch Commander and have his/her complaint heard immediately. This meeting with the Watch Commander provides greater public service than simply providing a complaint form and helps build trust between the community and law enforcement. The Watch Commander cannot refuse to take a complaint and must document the claims on a WCSCR. The Watch Commander shall provide the complainant with a copy of the form along with the tracking number for reference. Complainants are also given a handout, "Procedures for Public Complaints" (SH-CR-596), which explains our complaint process. In addition, the complainant is mailed a letter from the Unit Commander explaining the complaint process and further procedures should the complainant be dissatisfied with the review of his/her complaint.

Each station and jail of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has signs in areas visited by the public which provides a specific "800" number they can call to make a complaint. These signs are posted in English and Spanish. During business hours, the calls are answered by Internal Affairs Bureau (IAB) personnel who complete the WCSCR. During non-business hours, these calls are answered by Sheriff's Headquarters Bureau (SHB) personnel who will complete the WCSCR. Both IAB and SHB personnel provide the complainant with the tracking number. This process provides the public with an alternative should they feel uncomfortable making a complaint in person.

Another option for complaints from the public is the use of the Department's website (www.lasd.org). The complainant may complete a Public Response Form and submit it electronically. A WCSCR is generated from the Public Response Form.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department believes that our procedures of personally meeting with complainants, controlling the complaint forms through the use of tracking numbers, providing complainants with the "Procedures for Public Complaints," and the follow-up letter from the Unit Commander is the most efficient process for ensuring that public complaints are properly documented and that these complaints are properly investigated.

RECOMMENDATION NO 2 (Regarding Custody/Corrections-Jails)

Both the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department and Los Angeles City Police Department establish a uniform standard for the display and dissemination of citizen complaint forms and their processing procedure at the stations and jails.

RESPONSE

Custody Operations and Correctional Services Divisions' procedures for the display and dissemination of citizen complaints and processing procedures are governed by the Department's Manual of Policy and Procedures, section 3-04/010.35-"Public Accessibility to Information about the Complaint Process." Complaint forms are kept with each jail facility Watch Commander, who is responsible for the decision to complete the Service Comment Report and issue the "Procedures for Public Complaints" form.

Restricting the responsibility for the issuance of complaint forms to the facility Watch Commander guarantees the citizen's comments will be heard immediately by a facility manager. Through corrective measures consistent with his/her authority, the Watch Commander will work toward finding a resolution which is fair and consistent with the Department's service-oriented policing philosophy.

RRD:BKM:sf

SLJ:MLB:kj